

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANTIA 03864 122019Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 3864

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CI, PROP

SUBJ: PINOCHET WANTS POLITICAL ITEMS BARRED FROM PRESS

1. SUMMARY: IN SPEECH ON GOC'S SOCIAL ACTION PROGRAM (SEPTTEL), PRESIDENT PINOCHET CRITICIZED "DESTRUCTIVE CRITICISM" AND CALLED FOR BANNING OF ALL STORIES OF A POLITICAL NATURE FROM THE PRESS. SOME OF HIS COMMENTS IMPLY THAT HE MIGHT HAVE HAD THE RECENT FREI INTERVIEW IN "ERCILLA" IN MIND. END SUMMARY.

2. SPEAKING TO PROVINCIAL "INTENDENTES" AND OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS JUNE 10, PINOCHET NOTED "THE HIGH SOCIAL COST" OF PRESENT ECONOMIC RECOVERY PROGRAM AND URGED HIS AUDIENCE TO TAKE ALL POSSIBLE MEASURES TO ALLEVIATE SITUATION OF THOSE MOST AFFECTED. HE SPECIFICALLY TOLD LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO BE SURE THAT CITIZENS ARE GIVEN ADEQUATE INFORMATION CONCERNING WHAT GOVERNMENT IS DOING FOR THEM, THEREBY AVOIDING THE APPEARANCE OF "THE CAMPAIGN OF SLANDER, RUMORS, AND LIES OF WHICH YOU ARE AWARE."

3. HENCEFORTH, PINOCHET SAID, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS SHOULD FLATLY REJECT "THE NEGATIVE CRITICISM OF PERSONS INTERESTED IN CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE UNFAVORABLE TO WHAT WE ARE DOING". WHILE HE ACCEPTS CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM, HE CONTINUED, "WHAT IS UNACCEPTABLE IS DESTRUCTIVE CRITICISM (BY) CRITICS WHO PROPOSE NO SOLUTIONS. THE INTERESTING PART OF CRITICISM IS THE ALTERNATIVES PROPOSED. THIS IS WHAT SOME PEOPLE DO NOT DO; THEY CRITICIZE AND THEY TALK, BUT WHEN THEY HAD

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SANTIA 03864 122019Z

THEIR CHANCE TO RESOLVE SOME PROBLEM, THEY DID NOT DO SO.

EITHER THEY LACK CHARACTER OR THEY LACK OTHER THINGS."

4. FINALLY, PINOCHET STRESSED THAT ALL PUBLICIATION OF A POLITICAL NATURE SHOULD BE ENDED. "LET'S STOP THESE PUBLICATIONS. WE'RE ONLY HELPING THE POLITICIANS. POLITICS ARE IN RECESS. THEREFORE, THERE SHOULD NOT BE ANY PUBLICATIONS IN ANY MEDIA ON ANY ASPECT OF POLITICS. IF A POLITICIAN WANTS TO MAKE STATEMENTS OF THIS TYPE, LET HIM GO OUT OF THE COUNTRY TO FULFILL HIS DESIRE. IN CHILE, WE ARE NOT INTERESTED; IT ONLY CAUSES PROBLEMS. I THEREFORE ASK YOU TO AVOID THOSE THINGS WHICH PROVOKE POLEMICS AND ONLY GIVE AN ADVANTAGE TO SOME."

5. COMMENT: PINOCHET'S BLUNT REMARKS, COLORED BY THE JUNTA'S NORMAL ANTIPATHY FOR POLITICS AND POLITICIANS, WILL CERTAINLY BE TAKEN BY MANY LOCAL OBSERVERS AS YET ANOTHER GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECENT INTERVIEW BY EX-PRESIDENT EDUARDO FREI ON CHILEAN ECONOMIC POLICIES (SANTIAGO 3613). AS WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY NOTED, PUBLIC DEBATE ON THESE POLICIES HAS TESTED LIMITS OF PERMISSIBLE DISSENT IN CHILEAN PRESS. PINOCHET HAS NOW ADDED HIS STATEMENT OF DISAPPROVAL TO THOSE PREVIOUSLY MADE BY JUNTA MEMBER AIR FORCE GENERAL LEIGH AND MINISTER OF ECONOMY SERGIO DE CASTRO, AND HAS EXPRESSED HIMSELF--- NOT FOR THE FIRST TIME -- ON THE WAY IN WHICH HE BELIEVES THE GOC'S PRESS AND MEDIA POLICY SHOULD BE STRUCTURED. CHILEAN OFFICIALS MAY TAKE THEIR CUE FROM PINOCHET'S WORDS AND CAMP DOWN MORE FIRMLY IN THIS AREA. ON THE OTHER HAND, GIVEN JUNTA'S APPARENT RELUCTANCE TO CRACK DOWN ON THE FEW CRITICS SERIOUSLY QUESTIONING THE GOC'S ECONOMIC POLICIES, IT IS EQUALLY POSSIBLE THAT THE LATTER MAY BE ABLE TO CONTINUE THEIR RUNNING COMMENTARY. POPPER

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